
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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Date: June 25, 2013
Time: 9:45 a.m.

2013 NORTHERN SOUTHEAST INSIDE (NSEI) SUBDISTRICT SABLEFISH FISHERY ANNUAL HARVEST OBJECTIVE ANNOUNCEMENT

The 2013 NSEI Subdistrict commercial sablefish fishery annual harvest objective (AHO) is 1,002,162 round pounds. There are 78 valid Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permits for 2013, one less than in 2012; therefore the individual equal quota share (EQS) is 12,848 round pounds (a 4% increase from the 2012 EQS of 12,342 round pounds). The AHO is based on the sablefish acceptable biological catch (ABC) with decrements made for sablefish mortality in other fisheries.

The fishery opens by regulation at 8:00 a.m., August 15, 2013 and will close at 12:00 noon November 15, 2013. Permit holders should have received a letter detailing any legal overage or underage incurred during the 2012 fishing season; 2013 personal quota shares (PQS) will be adjusted based on this amount. Permit holders who did not receive that letter should contact Kamala Carroll at (907) 747-6688.

NSEI sablefish abundance has historically been estimated with a mark-recapture project. The ABC increased 4% in 2013 (1,207,282 round pounds) relative to the 2012 ABC (1,160,674 round pounds). Total sablefish abundance decreased 7% from the last abundance estimate in 2010; the increase in 2013 ABC was due primarily to updated sablefish length, age, and maturity data used in the harvest rate calculation and biomass forecast. An $F_{50\%}$ biological reference point (BRP) was used for calculating the 2013 ABC, resulting in a harvest rate of 7.8%. Commercial fishery catch per unit effort (CPUE) increased slightly in 2012 from 2011 levels; longline survey CPUE in round pounds per hook was stable.

2013 Survey Activities

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) conducted a sablefish tagging event in the NSEI Subdistrict using the ADF&G vessel, *R/V Medeia*, from May 21–June 14, 2013. Sablefish were captured using pot gear, tagged, and released. Tagged fish will be recovered in the 2013 ADF&G longline survey, commercial, subsistence, personal use, and recreational fisheries. The resultant data will be used to calculate a biomass estimate and set the 2014 NSEI Subdistrict commercial sablefish AHO.

The 2013 ADF&G longline survey is scheduled for July 28–August 3, 2013. Data from the 2013 longline survey will be used to obtain current size, age, and sexual maturity information for the 2014 stock assessment. We are still seeking to charter a third vessel for the southern portion of our longline survey. Please contact Kristen Green at (907) 747-6688 for more information about participating in this program.

Registration and Logbook Requirements

Fishermen must register prior to fishing and are required to keep a logbook during the fishery. Registration forms and logbooks will be available at ADF&G offices in Southeast Alaska beginning July 15, 2013. Completed logbook pages must be attached to the ADF&G copy of the fish ticket at the time of delivery. Confidential ADF&G envelopes for logbook pages may be requested when registering.

Logbooks must include, by set, the date and time gear is set and retrieved, specific location of harvest by latitude and longitude for start and ending positions, hook spacing, amount of gear (number of hooks or skates) used, depth of set, estimated weight of the target species, and the estimated weight of bycatch by species. Indicate for each set if the target species was sablefish or halibut and if there was any lost gear. A permit holder must retain all visibly injured or dead sablefish. Sablefish that are not visibly injured or dead may be released unharmed, and the permit holder must record in the logbook, by set, the number of live sablefish released. Record discard reason, e.g. fish are small, PQS has been met [5 AAC 28.170(f)].

Tagged Sablefish

Fishermen are requested to watch for tagged sablefish. Please record tag number(s) in the logbook next to the appropriate set and attach tag(s) directly in the log next to the specific set information. All tags returned will receive a reward. Tag rewards include a t-shirt and entry into an annual drawing for one \$1,000, two \$500, and four \$250 cash rewards. To qualify for entry in the annual drawing, ADF&G requires the following information: the tag, set location (latitude and longitude), date of capture of the fish, and the name and address of the person recovering the tag.

Fish Ticket Requirements

Landed weights must be recorded on an ADF&G fish ticket at the time of delivery. If a fisherman delivers fish in the round, the total round weight delivered must be recorded on the fish ticket. If a fisherman delivers dressed fish, the fish ticket must include the total landed dressed weight as well as the round weight equivalent, determined by using the standard 0.63 conversion rate. There is a 2% allowance for ice and slime. A fish ticket with landed weight must be completed prior to the resumption of fishing and each permit holder must have onboard copies of all NSEI fish tickets from the current season as well as their updated PQS tracking form. Fishermen are reminded that a completed fish ticket must be submitted to ADF&G before fish are transported out of Alaska.

Sablefish Possession and Landing Requirements

In the NSEI Subdistrict, the holder of a CFEC permit for sablefish may not retain more sablefish from the directed fishery than the annual amount of sablefish EQS specified in 5 AAC 28.170 (f). However, if a permit holder's harvest exceeds the EQS for that year, by not more than five percent, ADF&G shall reduce the permit holder's EQS for the following year by the amount of the overage. If a permit holder's harvest exceeds the permit holder's EQS by more than five percent, the proceeds from the sale of the overage in excess of five percent shall be surrendered to the state and the permit holder may be prosecuted under AS 16.05.723. If a permit holder's harvest is less than the permit holder's EQS established for the year, ADF&G shall increase the permit holder's PQS only for the following year by the amount of the underage that does not exceed five percent of the EQS [5 AAC 28.170 (k)]. For the 2013 fishing season, five percent of the annual EQS is 642 round pounds.

Bycatch Allowances

Allowable bycatch that may be legally landed on the NSEI sablefish permit is as follows:

Bycatch Species	Allowable Bycatch Amount
Demersal Shelf Rockfish (DSR)	1%
Shortraker and Roughey rockfish	7% in aggregate
Other rockfish & thornyheads	15% in aggregate
Lingcod	0%
Pacific Cod	20%
Spiny dogfish	35%
Other groundfish	20%

Bycatch limits are based on the round weight of the bycatch species to the round weight of the target species, (i.e. sablefish).

Full retention of all rockfish is required excluding thornyheads.

Pacific cod in excess of bycatch limits described above may be landed on a CFEC miscellaneous finfish (M) permit. Fishermen with halibut IFQ in regulatory area 2C and a CFEC halibut permit card must retain all halibut over 32 inches in length, up to the amount of their IFQ.

Prohibitions

The operator of a fishing vessel may not take sablefish in the NSEI area with sablefish from another area on board. Also, the operator of a vessel taking sablefish in the NSEI area shall unload before taking sablefish in another area [5AAC 28.170 (a) and (b)].

A vessel, or person onboard a vessel, from which commercial, subsistence, or personal use longline fishing gear was used to take fish in the NSEI or SSEI Subdistricts during the 72-hour period immediately before the start of the commercial sablefish fishery in that subdistrict, or from which that gear will be used during the 24-hour period immediately after the closure of the commercial sablefish fishery in that subdistrict, may not participate in the taking of sablefish in that subdistrict during that open sablefish fishing period. A vessel, or a person onboard a vessel, who has harvested and sold their PQS before the final day of the sablefish season in that subdistrict is exempt from the prohibition on fishing longline gear during the 24-hour period immediately following the closure of the sablefish fishery in that subdistrict. In addition, a vessel or a person on board a vessel, commercial fishing for sablefish in the NSEI Subdistrict may not operate subsistence or personal use longline gear for groundfish from that vessel until all sablefish harvested in the commercial fishery are offloaded from the vessel.

For additional information, visit the Southeast Regional Groundfish Fisheries web site:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.groundfish>.

The most recent fishery information report can be found here:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/FMR13-08.pdf>.

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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<i>Groundfish Hotline</i>				<i>747-4882</i>				